

Inspection and Evaluation Committee

President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency

November 2003

Inspection and Evaluation Committee Members

JOHNNIE FRAZIER
IG Commerce, Chair

CHRISTINE BOESZ
IG National Science Foundation

CLARK KENT ERVIN
Acting IG Homeland Security

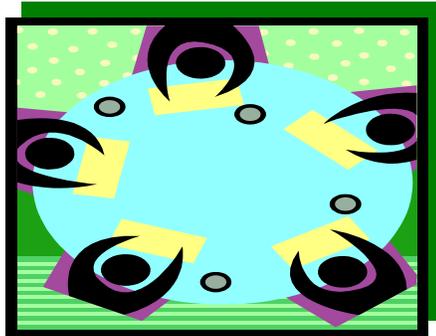
GLENN FINE
IG Justice

GORDON HEDDELL
IG Labor

RICHARD GRIFFIN
IG Veterans Affairs

DARA CORRIGAN
Acting IG Health and Human Services

STEPHEN SMITH
IG Farm Credit Administration



PCIE Human Resources Committee Furthers Project on Core Competencies for Inspectors and Evaluators

During the October 2 meeting of the I&E Roundtable, hosted by Nikki Tinsley, EPA Inspector General and chair of the PCIE Human Resources Committee, she noted that one element of PCIE's strategic framework involves evaluating training across OIGs and providing suitable courses for all staff. But Nikki also noted the importance of first determining required skills or core competencies before establishing training needs. Roland Cyr, a member of Nikki's staff and staff to the Human Resources Committee, provided a brief update on the project's core competencies work.

After discussing basic skills, with input on technical training requirements that would allow staff to move between OIGs as well as from journeyman-level to management roles, focus turned to core competencies. John Mullins, heading that area of the project, led a session on reviewing skill sets for journeyman-level staff, senior management, and the organization as a whole. The infor-

mation gathered will be shared with Roundtable members in the near future.

EPA OIG Launches Its Evaluation Organization

Nikki Tinsley briefed I&E Roundtable members on her relatively new inspections and evaluations function. EPA OIG was a traditional OIG organization with audit, investigation, and management divisions primarily focused on complaint issues when Nikki Tinsley took over. Discussions with Hill staff and others, however, made her realize the need to address larger environmental issues and be more responsive to questions from Congress.

Nikki and her staff developed a plan to create an OIG evaluation organization. This was favorably received by EPA management and the Hill. Both of them provided additional funding to help establish the new office. EPA OIG staff developed an implementation strategy using expertise gleaned from the scientific and environmental communities. Evaluation staff from Ohio State University assisted with the office design. EPA's evaluation office is headed by Kwai Chan, formerly with the General Accounting Office.



The next I&E Committee meeting will be hosted by NSF IG Christine Boesz on January 29, 2004. This will be a joint meeting with the I&E Roundtable. Further details to come.

WELCOME

The two newest members of the Roundtable are Charles Kandt, Tennessee Valley Authority, and Steve Higgins, Government Printing Office.

The evaluation staff also includes staff with skills in the environmental sciences and program analysis. Nikki reported that there have been challenges in addressing the learning curve as the organization has matured. One of those challenges has been having auditors and evaluators working concurrently on projects.

However, Nikki feels the “human capital pool” concept is starting to gel. The organization currently has 12 auditors and 12 evaluators assigned to audit and evaluation units, with an additional pool of staff for assignment to specific jobs. This pooling of staff creates a blend of skills and knowledge. This blend will be reexamined based on forthcoming job-related performance and workload data. Nikki noted that it is difficult for some assistant IGs to find they do not “own” certain staff. A matrix organization is a difficult transition to make for staff unfamiliar with this concept.

Since September 11, Nikki reported that EPA’s OIG has successfully worked with local and state auditors to explore the need to address the possibility of terrorism at water-related installations. That success has led them to seek continuing partnering opportunities with local and state governments given that such joint efforts can effectively leverage OIG resources.

ROUNDTABLE REPORTS & PROJECTS

The Roundtable is nearing completion of three projects and midway through a fourth.



Travel Card Guide – The guide outlines common problems, preventive measures and other solutions as well as best practices identified in the work of 25 OIGs that reviewed travel card programs. OIG comments on the draft report have been incorporated into a final manuscript currently being printed. It is expected that the guide will be available for distribution in early January.

On-Line Directory of OIG Purchase and Travel Card Reports – The directory (a searchable database of 125 reports) is a useful resource to anyone seeking to review or improve management of purchase and travel card programs. It is available at www.ignet.gov under “What’s New.” Eleazar Velazquez, Commerce OIG, thanked Roundtable members for responding to the data call and asked that feedback on the database, and future travel and purchase card reports, be submitted to him at velazquez@oig.doc.gov or to Debbie Holmes at dholmes@oig.doc.gov.

Survey of OIG Inspection and Evaluation Units – The survey offers a profile of the 26 federal OIG I&E units. Brian Rawdon, Health and Human Services OIG, who has the lead on this project, has updated the draft survey in response to comments received from the various IGs and their I&E unit directors. The report has been forwarded to the Commerce graphics and editorial staff for enhancement.

Quality Standards for Inspections: An Update – Elise Ennis, Energy OIG, reported that comments had been received from six OIGs and an e-mail was sent asking for final comments by October 9. Proposed changes will be shared with Roundtable members in the near future.

New Project Ideas – Jill Gross, I&E Roundtable chair, asked members to contact her or Debbie Holmes if interested in taking the lead on a new Roundtable project. Responses to the I&E unit survey had indicated some interest in a cross-cutting review in the area of security or procurement/government contracting. Others were interested in self-help and training projects for the I&E community.



TRAINING

The IG Auditors Training Institute (IGATI) is offering evaluation-related courses (see their FY 2004 catalog at www.igati.org). Chris Heppe, Commerce OIG, reported that Commerce OIG will host a course, “Write to the Point,” taught by David Wright, Health and Human Services OIG, on December 3 and 4. Staff from four other OIG I&E units will also attend.

If you have questions or need further information about anything in this newsletter, or about any Roundtable matters, contact Debbie Holmes at 202-482-2600 or dholmes@oig.doc.gov.

